

Women of the Colorado State Patrol - History



The first woman's uniform was actually a man's uniform. Women had to take their shirts and pants to a tailor to get them fitted. Today uniforms and leather gear are made specifically for women and the need for tailoring has been greatly minimized.



In January 1977, Linda Dodd, Patricia O'Rourke, and Judith Tolbert were the first three women hired to attend the Colorado State Patrol Academy. At that time, they were considered "Patrolmen" since all officers were considered Patrolmen until 1979 when the terminology was changed to "Trooper". Patricia O'Rourke went on to become the first woman Sergeant in 1984 and retired in 1989.

O'Rourke



Dodd

The first women's involvement in the uniformed ranks of the State Patrol began in October, 1976, with the inception of the Cadet Program. Within the Cadet Program, candidate officers would spend a period of time riding with an experienced officer. They were allowed to do some of the paper work, assist with accident investigations, and generally learn how an officer functions. Cadets could not sign tickets or documents, as they were not certified officers. They were also assigned to work in a communications center and in a troop office for a period of time.



The first woman trooper of the Colorado State Patrol, Patricia O'Rourke, began service with the Cadet Program. She entered a recruit class in January, 1977. Upon graduation, she was stationed in Vail. On March 1, 1984, she was promoted to Sergeant and transferred to Steamboat Springs.

Tolbert

Class of 77-1





Francis Galvin was the first woman trooper to be killed in the line of duty. She entered the Patrol in October of 1977. On May 24, 1979, Trooper Galvin was investigating a fatal accident east of Pueblo when she was struck by a vehicle. She died of her injuries the next day. She was 37 years old, and only one of six women officers in the State Patrol at the time.



The first African American woman hired by the Colorado State Patrol was Rosiland Johnson in 1986. She made history again when she was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 1991.

In 1994, Lora Thomas made Patrol history when she was sworn in as the first woman Troop Captain in 1994, after becoming a trooper in 1984. She was then promoted to Major in 1998, becoming the first woman to obtain that rank, as well. Trooper Gini England began her career in 1982 and was promoted to Captain of the Durango Office in 2004 and retired in 2007.

Trooper Brenda Leffler began her career in 1993 and was promoted to Captain of Homeland Security in 2005 and to Major of Homeland Security in 2007.

As of 2012, current uniformed rank in the Colorado State Patrol include the following:



Lt. Colonel Brenda Leffler



Captain Lauri Hadley



**Sergeant Tonya
Billinger**



Sergeant Carol Nero



**Master Sergeant Anne
Robinson**



Sergeant Afsoon Ansari



Sergeant Joy Grissom



Corporal Heather Cobler



Corporal Shawna Swale

**Thank you to all the women and men who paved the road for all
of us. We are truly thankful!**